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## Journey Tribute Concert Benefits Two Local Animal Nonprofits

Contributed

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Departure members, clockwise from upper right, Brian Williams (lead vocals), Jason Wilson (guitar/vocals), Joel Hayes (keyboard/guitar/vocals) and Doug Ballard (bass/vocals); inset, Chris Stone (drums/vocal)

COURTESY OF VICKI D. PHOTOGRAPHY

The final concert of the 2023 Cooper Ford Concert Series is the ultimate tribute show for Journey fans. End summer with a bang with Departure, presented by Vision 4 Moore live on stage Friday, Sept. 22, at 7 p.m., at Cooper Ford in Carthage.

In their 15th year together, Departure is the most respected Journey tribute band in the nation. Departure members Brian Williams (lead vocals), Jason Wilson (guitar/vocals), Doug Ballard (bass/vocals), Joel Hayes (keyboard/guitar/vocals) and Chris Stone (drums/vocal) replicate the look, sound and feel of the original '80s super group. These veteran musicians love what they do and have developed an amazing on-stage chemistry. They pride themselves on giving their audience an incredible high-energy, qualitative stage show from start to finish.

Come out and experience the magic of Journey while supporting the Companion Animal Clinic Foundation and the Moore County Citizens' Pet Responsibility Committee.

The Companion Animal Clinic Foundation is a nonprofit organization founded in 2005 by Deborah Wilson and veterinarians Dr. Tom Daniel and Dr. Joseph Currie as a way to battle the "euthanasia of abandoned and unwanted animals in central North Carolina through affordable spay/neuter opportunities." The foundation supports the Sandhills Spay Neuter Veterinary Clinic, in Vass, with funding, surgical equipment and facility needs. In early 2022, the Companion Animal Clinic Foundation debuted a new 24-foot, state-of-the-art set of wheels dedicated to supporting the mission of the Sandhills Spay Neuter Veterinary Clinic by providing spay and neuter services to 14 rural or underserved counties surrounding Moore County. The clinic's financially assisted spay and neuter operations range from \$25-\$75.

The Moore County Citizens' Pet Responsibility Committee (PRC) provides and drives solutions to the pet overpopulation crisis in Moore County, with the support of the Moore Board of County Commissioners. Each year, the Pet Responsibility program is presented as an integral part of Moore County Schools' character education program and focuses on good judgment, integrity, kindness, perseverance, respect and responsibility. Launched in 2008 with the goal of sharing the Pet Responsibility Program with fourth-grade students, today, it is taught annually in all Moore County public schools and five major private and charter schools. The PRC leverages a diverse volunteer base with volunteers presenting a carefully constructed program for a period of six weeks.

Accredited therapy dogs and their handlers are a key component of the program, celebrating the joy of a well trained, well cared for and loved dog. The therapy dog teams are also the backbone of the Reading Tails Program, which helps elementary school students improve their reading skills.

Vision4Moore began with the late Bob Baillie's desire to support those who help others. A commercial developer and philanthropist, Baillie lost his sight after heart bypass surgery, but found renewed purpose helping others with his trusty guide dogs by his side. Pamela Partis, who serves as executive director, and Baillie met through their shared work with the Moore County Pet Responsibility Committee, and founded Vision4Moore as a "vehicle" that could support other organizations.

"Bob insisted on having the word vision in there because he did have vision; not sight, but vision. When thinking about who helps others, nonprofits are at the top of the list. We knew we wanted to help the nonprofits, but how to best do that was the question. These organizations are working as hard and as fast as they can to assist their clients and don't necessarily have the resources to produce large fundraising events," Partis said.

Vision4Moore pays for everything and provides everything, signs the contracts and handles the logistics of the concert series events. In turn, nonprofit partners are asked to provide volunteers, post event fliers and help sell tickets. At the conclusion of each event, the proceeds are split 50/50. Vision4Moore rolls their portion of donations forward to help offset costs for the next scheduled event.

Since its inception, Vision4Moore has raised over \$100,000 for local charities.

Tickets for the Friday, Sept. 22 Departure, a Journey tribute band, concert are on sale now. The event will be held outside Cooper Ford, located 10 minutes north of the Pinehurst Traffic Circle, in Carthage, and will be held rain or shine. As long as it is safe for the audience and band to perform, no refunds will be issued.

Gates open at 6 p.m. and the show begins at 7 p.m. Bring your own chairs. Beer and wine will be available for purchase, in addition to food trucks on-site. No outside coolers are permitted; no pets, please. In case of inclement weather, visit [vision4moore.com](http://vision4moore.com) or call (910) 365-9890 for updates.

Tickets are \$27 in advance or \$35 at the door; \$12 for students (13-17 with ID) and children 12 and under admitted free; purchase online at [TicketMeSandhills.com](http://TicketMeSandhills.com).

